

REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, claim 17 is amended response to Item 2 of the Office Action. No new matter is presented and, accordingly, approval and entry of the foregoing amended claim 17 is respectfully requested.

STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 9-13 are allowed.

Claims 1, 7, 8, 14, 15 and 17 are rejected.

Claims 2-6 are objected to.

Claims 1-17 are pending and under consideration.

ITEM 7: OBJECTION TO CLAIMS 2-6

Claims 2-6 are objected to but are indicated to be allowable if suitably rewritten to be dependent upon a rejected base claim or if rewritten to independent form including all the limitations of the respective base and any intervening claims. The conditional indication of allowability is appreciated. However, the claims have not been rewritten as suggested in view of the traversal of the claim rejections, as set forth hereinafter.

ITEM 3: REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1, 7, 8 14, AND 15 FOR OBVIOUSNESS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102(e) AS BEING ANTICIPATED BY TAKAMORI ET AL. (U.S. PATENT 6,867,552);

The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Particularly, Applicants filed herein, concurrently with this application, a certified copy of Japanese Patent Application 2001-012420, filed January 19, 2001, to which priority benefit is claimed in accordance with 35 U.S.C. §119. A verified translation of that priority application is filed concurrently herewith.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the present U.S. application be granted the benefit of the filing date of January 19, 2001 of the Japanese Patent Application No. 2001-012420.

The Takamori et al. reference, relied upon in Item 3 of the present Action, was issued March 15, 2005 based on a U.S. application filed November 13, 2001, which is the earliest effective prior art date of that reference and which is later than the priority date of January 19, 2001 of the present application.

Accordingly, withdrawal of Takamori et al. as a reference and of the claim rejections of Item 1 are respectfully submitted to be appropriate and such actions are respectfully requested.

ITEM 6: REJECTION OF CLAIM 17 AS BEING UNPATENTABLE FOR OBVIOUSNESS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103 OVER KISHI ET AL (ADMITTED PRIOR ART: U.S. PATENT 6,686,912) IN VIEW OF HASHIMOTO ET AL. (U.S. PATENT 6,483,250)

The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 17 of the present application recites, in the last paragraph:

a ramp waveform generation circuit connected between a first signal line... and ground so as to generate a ramp waveform to be applied... to [a]... capacitive load.

The Examiner asserts in the Office Action that Kishi et al. discloses a drive circuit, a power supply circuit, a capacitor, and a power recovery circuit connected between a first signal line and ground. The Examiner concedes, however, that:

Kishi et al.'s admitted prior art fail to disclose a ramp waveform generation circuit.

Kishi et al. thus fails to disclose a significant recitation of claim 17 and hence is inadequate, alone, to support the rejection of claim 17.

The Examiner thus relies on Hashimoto et al. (U.S. Patent 6,483,250) as disclosing a ramp waveform generation circuit for generating a ramp waveform to be applied to a capacitive load - - and on that basis asserts that the invention defined by claim 17 is obvious over the combination of Kishi and Hashimoto. The Examiner offers no prima facie demonstration of the alleged obviousness of that combination and merely makes the unsubstantiated contention that "it would have been obvious to modify Kishi et al....with the teaching of Hashimoto et al...." and the rejection thus is defective. MPEP 2143-2143.03.

As noted at the outset, the Examiner admits that the structure corresponding to a ramp waveform generation circuit recited in claim 17 of the present application is not disclosed in Kishi.

Moreover, Applicants respectfully submit that Hashimoto does not disclose any structure corresponding to a ramp waveform generation circuit as recited in claim 17, i.e., a ramp waveform generation circuit connected between the first signal line and the ground. A ramp waveform generation circuit of Hashimoto indicated by the Examiner is, as shown in FIG. 2 or FIG. 9, connected between an electrode of capacitance element CP and Vr, and is not

connected to ground. The citations to Hashimoto set forth by the Examiner in Item 6 of the Action at page 5, namely, col. 12, lines 34-52; col. 13, lines 1-11; and col. 18, lines 40-55, provide no disclosure of any structure connecting a ramp waveform generation circuit between a first signal line and a ground, as defined by claim 17.

Applicants moreover submit that a power supply circuit and a ramp waveform circuit differ in their respective structures and effects and, accordingly, are not amendable to being substituted, one for the other.

As described above, the structure of connecting a ramp waveform generation circuit between a first signal line and a ground, recited in claim 17 of the present application, is not disclosed in either of Kishi and Hashimoto, and, it follows, cannot be rendered obvious over the combination of the two references.

It is respectfully submitted that the foregoing has demonstrated that the combination of the Kishi and Hashimoto fail to suggest or render obvious the invention as defined by claim 17 and the rejection should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: November 14, 2006

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